DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 193 843 EC 130 802

AUTHOR	Green, Debra; Wing, Jerry
TITLE	Tapping Community Resources.
INSTITUTION	Council for Exceptional Children, Reston, Va.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	80
GRANT	300-78-0410
NOTE	19p.; A part of the Education and Work Series.
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Career Education; *Community Resources; *Disabilities; Elementary Secondary Education; *School Community Relationship

ABSTRACT

The final document in a series on career education for exceptional students is designed to help educators locate and make use of resources available in the community. Authors include specific strategies, sample letters, and lists of common community resources. A question-answer format is used to address such topics as ways in which community resources contribute to classroom instruction, reasons why community representatives become involved with the school, and preparation for using community resources. Briefly considered are cultural institutions, service clubs, and governmental agencies. A list of 10 steps to follow in resource procurement concludes the booklet. (SBH)

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ED193843

Education and Work Series

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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Tapping Community Resources

Debra Green, Jerry Wing

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The Council For Exceptional Children

EC130802

Published in 1980 by The Council for Exceptional Children, 1920 Association Drive, Reston, Virginia 22091.

The material in this publication was prepared pursuant to Grant No. 300-78-0410 with the US Office of Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. However, points of view or opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the policy or position of the Office of Education.

Printed in the United States of America.

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Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states:

> Any program or activity which receives Federal financial assistance 1) may not exclude qualified handicapped persons from aids, benefits or services; 2) must provide equal opportunity to participate or benefit; 3) must provide services as effective as those provided to the nonhandicapped; and 4) may not provide different or separate services except when necessary to provide equally effective benefits.

Therefore, any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance, or that is part of a larger entity which receives federal financial assistance, must be operated in compliance with these laws.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES ON CAREER EDUCATION AVAILABLE FROM CEC

Brolin, D. E. (Ed.). *Life centered career education—A competency based approach.* 1978. (No. 180)

Brolin, D. E., McKay, D. J., & West, L. L. *Trainer's guide to life centered career education.* 1978. (No. 181)

Davis, S. & Ward, M. *Vocational education of handicapped students—A guide for policy development.* 1978. (No. 182)

Hoyt, K. F. *Career education—Its nature and need.* (Tape cassette, No. 62)

Johnson, C. M. *Expanding work options for exceptional students.* 1979. (No. 194)

Johnson, C. M., Lamkin, J. & Ward, M. *Expanding work options for exceptional students—A facilitator's kit.* 1979. (No. 193)

Kokaska, C. J. (Ed.). *Career futures for exceptional individuals.* 1979. (No. 195)

Lake, T. P. (Ed.). *Career education: Exemplary programs for the handicapped.* (No. 84)

Weisgerber, R. A. (Ed.). *Vocational education: Teaching the handicapped in regular classes.* 1978. (No. 179)

Acknowledgments

Many people are owed special thanks for their volunteered time spent providing information on their projects, participating in our survey, and critically reviewing all the components of this series. Special thanks are extended to the following individuals:

Members of the Working Advisory Committee

Robert Bhaerman	ERIC on Career Education	Columbus, Ohio
Richard Cutbirth	Training Director Electric Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee	Las Vegas, Nevada
Carol Fusco	CEC Board of Governors	Columbia, South Carolina
Tracy Harris	Executive Vice President International SCEC	Alexandria, Virginia
William Harris	Office of Career Education US Office of Education	Washington D.C.
Chiyo Horiuchi	State Career Education Consultant	Denver, Colorado
William E. Johnson	Member CEC Executive Committee	Kansas City, Missouri
Charles Kokaska	Division on Career Development	Long Beach, California
Jerry Wing	Director of Veterans Program National Alliance of Business	Washington, D.C.

Individuals who assisted with site visits

Arizona
Kati Ball
Jane Kinney
Sharon Komar
Dave Roels
Patti Waldrip

Massachusetts
Legare Cuyler
June Foster
Thailia McMillian
Catherine Minassian
Vic Petzy
John Post
Laurene Tucker

Minnesota
Antoinette Johns

New Hampshire
Larry Cormier
Tom Duval

Oregon
Dave Anderson
Dave Bacman
Leon Fuhrman
Martin Kimeldorf
Dallas Lommen
Tom Williams

Washington, D.C.
Ellen Datcher

Wisconsin
Alice Kudlata
Gordon Schuetz

Preface

During the past few years The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) has been involved in a number of different projects, the success of which has been directly attributed to CEC members at the local level who are part of CEC chapters and state or provincial federations. Various CEC units in the field have proven on numerous occasions to be an innovative resource to their local communities for training, resource exchange, program development, and political action. This source of strength to a community should continue to grow at a steady pace.

Chapters or federations often identify specific areas of concern or interest in their communities. Frequently, they develop instructional or inservice programs for members on pertinent issues through speakers or site visits. CEC sponsored newsletters or other periodic communications have become a source of information to members. Recognizing this capability, CEC has developed a series of publications aimed at helping local chapter members or any other interested professionals design and implement a series of activities in their communities that will be of professional interest and assistance.

In 1978 the Office of Career Education, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, awarded a contract to The Council for Exceptional Children to identify the needs of its members in the area of career education for exceptional students and to prepare a number of teacher focused products for their use.

Results of a 1979 survey conducted by CEC of a sample of its teacher membership, under the sponsorship of the Office of Career Education, revealed an understanding of and responsiveness to the need for career education for exceptional students. The heaviest concentration of respondents was at the elementary school level, with significantly smaller numbers at the preschool or secondary levels. Experience and/or training in the areas of learning disabilities, behavioral disorders, and all degrees of mental retardation were most frequently cited. Among statements that received 95% to 99% agreement among special educators surveyed were:

- Career education is as important for handicapped students as it is for other students.
- Schools should help students develop a realistic perception of their abilities, skills, and values in order to prepare them for career choices.
- Preparation for work is one of the several goals of education.
- Both liberal education and occupational education are important to the concept of career education.
- Students should be taught the importance of both paid and unpaid work.
- The use of community resources is essential for a comprehensive career education program.

Statements receiving 70% to 85% agreement included:

- In all grades, students should have the opportunity to explore the world of work and the skills necessary for various jobs.
- The school curriculum should teach students how to prepare for and use leisure time.
- As a vehicle for basic instruction, career education can strengthen students' achievement in reading and mathematics.

Among respondents, 74% to 90% disagreed with such statements as the following: Liberal education is incompatible with the goals of career education. Separate instruction in career education would be better than incorporating it into the existing curriculum. The present high school vocational courses teach students enough about the world of work. College preparatory students profit very little from career education. Finally, respondents expressed a strong 90% disagreement with the statement, Career education is just another fad that will soon be forgotten.

While the majority (73%) of special educators surveyed indicated a willingness to integrate career education on a regular basis into their instructional activities, 57% also stated that it was "very difficult," "difficult," or "somewhat difficult" to do so. Cited most frequently as a major problem was lack of instructional time (43%), followed by lack of available instructional materials (35%).

THE EDUCATION AND WORK SERIES

The first booklet of the series, *Making Programs Happen: A Planning Guide for CEC Members,* by Carol Fusco and Tracy Harris, sets out a number of suggested activities for CEC chapters and federations. This publication will provide the reader with an array of activities that could be undertaken by a chapter, a federation, or simply by a group of concerned professionals. Other components in the series provide extended resources for the refinement of special projects.

The second and most comprehensive component of the series is *Getting Started: Career Education Activities for Exceptional Students (K-9),* by Jill S. Lamkin. Approximately 150 classroom activities are included for teachers of exceptional students at the elementary middle, and junior high levels. Building from a basic

set of career education definitions and general theory, the author has laid out a clear description of specific career education concepts, objectives, and activities for students in grades K-3, 4-6, and 7-9. A brief review of materials and resources is also included.

Preparing Handicapped Students for Work: Alternatives for Secondary Programing, by Carole M. Johnson, is the third component. Educators have long been asking for materials that address the career education and work preparation of secondary school students. This monograph examines the myriad of issues that affect secondary programs for exceptional students and offers a number of recommendations to assist interested professionals in program planning.

The final component, *Techniques for Tapping Community Resources*, by Debra Green and Gerald Wing, has been designed to help educators locate and make use of the numerous resources available in any community. The authors have included specific strategies, sample letters, and lists of common community resources.

Although each component piece is part of a series, they may be used separately. Whether used alone or together, the volumes of the series should provide teachers with resources to initiate or expand their own program.

Implementing career education for exceptional persons means allowing them to explore individually the total array of work possible and to choose from among the widest possible set of opportunities. It means emphasizing the individual's successes and refusing to emphasize failures and shortcomings. It means not limiting exceptional persons in discovering their talents. It results in the recognition of the strengths of the individual, which can lead to a meaningful, satisfying career in a work oriented society.

CEC believes that career education is essential for all teachers working with exceptional children. Specifically, it is the position of CEC that appropriate education for all exceptional children must be directed toward providing the opportunity for every student to attain the highest possible level of career development through career education experiences. Teachers are in a position to make this happen.

Mary McCaffrey
Project Director

Tapping Community Resources

Teachers have been bombarded by literature and colleagues demanding more meaningful programs to better meet the needs of students in classrooms and prepare them for the work plan. Let's face it. In certain ways, our educational system has not always met the public's expectations. Too many students are graduating from or leaving school unmotivated, apathetic, and above all, ill prepared for the real world with its constant changes and accompanying pressures. It is for this reason that all educators must carefully consider the demands placed on students when they leave school and perhaps refocus the educational process to reflect these demands. Career education is one way to meet these pressures.

While there are many questions about career education, the most basic asked by teachers is, What is it? According to the CEC position statement (CEC, 1978) career education can provide opportunities for students to learn, in the least restrictive environment possible, the academic, daily living, personal-social, and occupational knowledges and skills necessary for attaining their highest levels of economic, personal, and social fulfillment. Skills such as career decision making, job seeking and holding, and productive use of leisure time need to be integrated with existing programs. Students must be made aware of the wide range of career options available to them. They must learn the practical living skills they will need in order to "make it." And, they must learn these skills in a conducive environment, one that makes them feel good about themselves. Moreover,

> individualized appropriate education for these children must be directed toward the opportunity for every student to attain his/her highest level of career potential through career education experiences. Provisions for these educational experiences should be reflected in an individualized education program for each exceptional child. . . . Career education must not be viewed separately from the total curriculum. Instead, it should permeate the entire school program, be integrated into the total curriculum, and even extend beyond it. (CEC, 1978)

You, as a teacher, have a pivotal role in the refocusing of educational programs to include career education concepts. You are the one who will screen a student's daily activities and determine whether or not they lead to career awareness, orientation, exploration, or preparation. You are the one who will ultimately be able to eliminate materials that contribute to stereotyping by sex or handicap. Teachers throughout the country have recently been asked to express their views on career education as well as their individual needs. A common request has been for assistance in the location and use of resources. This booklet has been written for you, the special educator, to provide you with information on the need for, and strategies to establish, a successful working relationship with community representatives.

The intent of this booklet is to provide teachers with an approach to uncover resources in their community, link up with those resources, and use those resources collaboratively to provide career education experiences for students. The format reflects a number of questions usually asked by teachers. The answers provided are meant to give you a place to start. You will have to take it from there.

TEACHERS, THE COMMUNITY, AND CAREER EDUCATION

Q. **Does this sound familiar?**
- **"I don't have time to teach career education in my class."**
- **"I've been teaching it for years."**
- **"15 kids to mainstream, IEP's to write, parents to conference, and you expect me to add something to my curriculum?"**
- **"I wouldn't know where to start."**
- **"Who has time to go on a wild-goose chase in this community?"**

A. There is no doubt about the fact that the role of the special educator has dramatically changed as a result of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act, Public Law 94-142. Yes, many of you have been teaching career education concepts for years, only under different names. For you, integrating career education into your program will simply mean a change of focus or attitude. It will not require more money, new skills, or fancy materials. You will need to remember that career education is concerned with the total person and his or her adjustment for community working and living. And the best place to start is in your own community. If you tap available resources and assure a coordinating role, your initial effort will pay off. In the long run, you will probably save valuable time, as you enhance your program and meet your students' needs.

Q. **Why should I be concerned about career education in my classroom?**

A. As a result of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Public Law 94-142, you, the teacher, must now provide educational experiences in the least restrictive environment. Have you also thought about how your students will adjust to the real world after they complete school? Many of you have probably had this objective in mind, but some of you may need to reorganize your programs in order to focus on practical career and coping skills, with accom-

panying attitudes. This does not necessarily mean curriculum change, but rather expansion.

One way to initiate this change is through the individualized education program (IEP). Exposure to career options and survival skills could well be integrated into the IEP when it is prepared by parents and teachers. Annual goals and short term objectives can be structured to provide a student with basic skills and to help ease the transition from school to adult living. Specifically, career education skills can be directly related to short term instructional objectives as well as annual goals. For instance, a short term objective for a student may be to write checks and deposit slips. If the teacher matches this objective with the practical experience of actually opening an account in a local bank, the experience will be more exciting and meaningful to the student.

Another example is the teacher who wants his or her students to learn to compare prices of grocery items by quantity. After preparation in the classroom, the culminating activity to meet this objective could be an actual trip to a local supermarket. Perhaps the entire experience could be tied to a unit on nutrition or consumer activism.

In general, as a result of Public Law 94-142, since every handicapped child must be offered a program, then every possible means must be explored to reach each child. The exceptional child's legal right to choose from the widest possible set of opportunities must not be forgotten. There are a number of untapped resources in every community that can help teachers make these opportunities known and prepare students to participate in them.

Q. **Where will career education fit into my special education curriculum?**

A. Basically, career education will serve to complement and enhance the total special education program. Rather than serving as a separate program, it can be integrated into the already existing curriculum. Once you begin to look at the career related opportunities in your present method of instruction, career education will be not a burden but an aid in providing a richer and more meaningful learning experience for your students.

Q. **How does career education reinforce special education?**

A. There are several ways this occurs. It is individualized. The integration of career education into a student's program will emphasize the personal development of each student and will require special skills and attitudes in order to cope with change. As each student works at his or her own rate, opportunities should be provided that show the relevance of current school work to future life experiences. Career educators and special educators both emphasize the strengthening of self concepts through successful experiences.

Teachers use information gathered from nondiscriminatory ongoing assessments to establish a program that builds on the students' weaknesses by emphasizing their strengths. For example, in dealing with a child who is mentally retarded, career education like special education would require lots of concrete practical experiences broken down in a step by step progression in order to set the stage for a successful learning experience.

Both are developmental and sequential. Just as the learning process is a continuous one, so too is a student's career development. As the student masters specific prerequisite skills, he or she will proceed in a prearranged progression from awareness, orientation, and exploration, to preparation. Students will develop a group of skills, all of which build on each other. This process must begin in preschool programs and continue throughout the student's school experience.

The combination of career education and special education increases relevance of daily instruction. By using the community as a learning laboratory and providing hands-on experience, teachers will be motivating students to become actively involved in the learning process. Hopefully, students will begin to understand that the concepts they encounter in the classroom become useful and necessary tools for developing meaningful, productive, and satisfying roles later on. The range is broad and can refer to specific skills like planning a trip or doing the laundry as well as global competencies like learning to read.

Q. **By making use of community resources can I integrate career education into the special education program?**

A. Education and work are related and need to be redefined as two interrelated arenas rather than two separate systems. Community resources can and are being tapped by educators all over this country to enhance their classroom programs. Correspondingly, the students leaving the schools enhance the workplace.

Q. **How can community resources contribute to my classroom instruction as well as to the total school program?**

A. Did you ever think of calling the Red Cross and asking them to send Rescue Annie with a speaker to demonstrate life saving techniques? Did you

know that the American Automobile Association will send auto safety information, maps, and tourbooks free of charge, or that the telephone company will supply you with training phones for classroom use?

Other resources are mentioned later; the list of available resources is extensive. All you have to do is call them. Never underestimate the value of community representatives. They can contribute a great deal to classroom instruction as well as to the total school program. You may want a representative from the National Alliance of Business to serve on an advisory council, or perhaps you will invite a local political candidate to come and speak. These people are vital for developing public awareness of career education. Not only can they donate materials and provide internships, plan field trips, or set up opportunities for a student to spend a certain amount of time following a worker through his or her routine, but they can actually advise you as to the relevance of your curriculum. They know labor market needs. We need them and they are willing to work with us. Use them.

Q. **Once you have decided to integrate career education and you understand your role, where do you start? How do you tap these resources?**

A. The first thing you need to do is take an inventory of your region. You must ask yourself what potential resources exist in your community and how these can meet the individual needs of students. For instance, if you live in a small town that depends on the sea as its major means of livelihood, how and where could your students learn about related industries? Or, if your community consists of a large metropolitan area, what are the possible career options? How will your students travel from one place to another? If they have physical handicaps, how can you program them for optimal mobility? If there are no special provisions in the community, why aren't there? These are the kinds of questions you will need to ask as you begin to integrate career education into your special education program.

Q. **What resources are available to me in my community?**

A. Numerous potential resources exist in every community. The following list (Brolin, McKay, & West, 1978) represents a starting place. You will need to compare this to what exists in your own community.

Governmental Agencies

- Vocational Rehabilitation
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
- Immigration
- Social Security Administration
- Veterans Administration
- Employment services
- Job Corps
- VISTA
- Comprehensive Employment Training Act (CETA) program
- Community Action Program
- Law enforcement agencies
- Legal and judicial agencies
- County commissioner
- County extension agent
- Taxation agencies
- Parks Department
- Welfare offices
- Motor Vehicle Bureau
- Agricultural extension agent
- Public health nurse
- Fish and Game Commission
- Adult Basic Education Program
- Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA)
- Migrant programs
- Military service representatives
- Correctional institutions
- Mental health agencies
- Sheltered workshops
- Governor's Commission for Employment of the Handicapped
- Planned Parenthood

Community Service Organizations

- YMCA
- YWCA
- Red Cross
- League of Women Voters
- Urban League
- American Legion
- Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Salvation Army
- Heart Association

Civic Clubs

- Chamber of Commerce
- JAYCEES
- Rotary Club
- Kiwanis
- Civitan
- Elks

- Lions
- Business and professional workers
- Knights of Columbus

Special Resources; Private, Nonprofit, and Volunteer Organizations

- Airports
- Weather stations
- Colleges
- Universities
- Monasteries
- Association for Retarded Citizens
- 4-H Clubs
- Veterans groups
- Boy Scouts
- Indian Guides
- Churches
- Hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Libraries
- Museums
- Goodwill Industries and other rehabilitation facilities
- Private mental health associations
- Girl Scouts
- Campfire Girls
- Big Brothers

Q. **What about using in-school resources as well?**

A. As you are probably aware, there is a wealth of resource persons available to you in your own school who not only have jobs reflective of the broader community, but who also have a myriad of other interesting hobbies and talents, or even part time employment. They should be tapped as well. Possibilities include (Johnson, 1979):

Classroom aide
Attendant
Counselor
Vocational counselor
Vocational evaluator
Vocational rehabilitator
Crisis resource teacher
Resource room teacher
Curriculum specialist
Hearing specialist
Reading specialist
Visual specialist
Interpreter
Bilingual aide
Special clinician
Psychologist
Notetaker
Community volunteer
Librarian
Administrator
Program supervisor
Social worker
Health professional
Physical therapist
Transportation service worker
Students
Other school personnel

Q. **Why do community representatives become involved in this cooperative effort?**

A. The fundamental reason is social responsibility. Many business or labor representatives are genuinely committed to active collaboration with the educational community in order to better serve the needs of exceptional children.

Another reason is that involvement with social institutions such as schools serves to promote and improve the educational system and communities in which firms or agencies do business. Also, recent federal legislation encourages business to hire and train workers with special needs.

Employers find career education an appropriate avenue for exposing students and educators to the economic system. Many of them feel that this exposure will fill information gaps, correct misinformation, and serve to eliminate stereotypical and often negative attitudes about the world of work and our economic system.

There are many benefits to be gained from the involvement of employers in the educational process since they are in possession of accurate and current career information and are concerned about high unemployment rates and the lack of a qualified population from which to recruit employees. The active engagement of employers serves to assure a better understanding, on the part of educators, of future labor needs and is likely to yield support for those educators who are interested in strengthening the capacity of the education system to meet those needs.

Labor leaders have also recognized in career education a means of providing a more accurate understanding of our economic system as well as correcting negative attitudes about labor movements and the role of unions. Labor representatives are supportive of career education because it allows students to explore a variety of career options they might otherwise be unaware of, and to fully develop their career interests to the maximum extent that their individual capabilities permit.

Thus, by becoming involved in this cooperative effort, community representatives help strengthen the educational system's abilities to meet their

needs, which in turn helps to better prepare students for the real world.

Q. **What will community representatives expect from members of the education community?**

A. The various community representatives will see the teacher as the "glue" needed for an effective collaboration or team effort. In the past, many business people have been discouraged by the response of the educational community. They felt threatened, as though they were infiltrating the education field and had no business being there. Educators are often viewed as second rate professionals. Teachers have numerous competencies and should feel confident about dealing with community representatives. In order for a team effort to succeed, the lines of communication between and within various sectors must be strengthened.

Q. **What should I say to the various community members I would like to contact?**

A. Before you contact various resources, you should have some understanding concerning what you will be teaching and how these resources can best be used. Share this with colleagues and principals to establish its legitimacy. There is an abundance of existing literature, with specific methods and materials for career education, with which you should become familiar. This can be done independently or with the aid of the school librarian or career education specialist in the local or state education department.

It is quite possible that additional objectives will be needed for your students. If this is the case, you may simply want to arrange a time to talk with a resource or set up a tour of his or her place of work. Often, such visits will help in setting realistic goals.

Q. **Should I build on a student's individualized education program?**

A. Yes! Use the IEP as a management tool, as it describes what your student is expected to accomplish as well as his or her current level of performance in relation to instructional areas. Community resources are best used when matched with objectives. Therefore, the integration of career education into the program will serve as a logical extension of the IEP.

Here are some examples of IEP goals and their career education application.

IEP Goal	Career Education Application
Personal/social adjustment: To expand the student's awareness of community beyond home and school, so that he or she will understand and feel more comfortable with his or her role in the total community setting.	Teachers will familiarize students with their community by planning many field trips to various places in the community or by walking and using school and public transportation. Possible visits include neighborhood stores, airports, train stations, churches, libraries, museums, hospitals, government buildings, parks, and employment services. Teachers will invite various speakers from business, government, or labor sectors to speak to students about their roles and services. Students can interview community representatives or spend time with individual workers. Help from parents should be procured.
Motor/independent living skills: To increase physical strength and mobility in the community.	The classroom teacher will work closely with the physical education teacher to provide activities for building the student's physical strength. Games to encourage speed and efficiency in a wheelchair will be used.
	Students will study maps of the city and explore modes of transportation. The teacher will contact parks and transportation commissions for assistance. Students will visit the bus depot, railroad station, or airport to see various jobs in action.

Continued on next page

IEP Goal	Career Education Application
Mathematics: To teach the student to make and count change.	The teacher will provide the student with experiences in handling money. Students will first role play and practice with simulations in the classroom. Students will then shop in real drug stores and grocery stores as well as cleaners and shoe repair shops. Bus and taxi cab experience may also be included.
Health/science: To expand the student's knowledge about the human body and how it works.	The teacher will plan visits to science museums, hospitals, and doctor's office. The teacher will invite a representative from public health, Red Cross, or American Heart Association to bring props and literature and inform students. Discussion about the student's health problem should be initiated.
Communication skills/peer relations: To stimulate verbal expression and interaction with peers.	The teacher will provide creative art experiences in and out of the classroom to stimulate student interaction. The student will work in a group activity experiencing movement, drama, music, and art. Group discussions and cooperation as well as confronting feelings will be stressed.

Once you have identified possible resources for your goals, you will need to meet with community representatives and plan your strategy. Be conscious of being direct and precise. The representative must understand what your expectations and purposes are, as well as when, where, and with whom he or she will be working. You need to find out what they have in mind and how it will be accomplished. Your input at this point is critical in that you know each student's learning style and how best to meet your students' needs.

Q. **What is the best way to establish contact?**

A. You may want to contact various community resource people by mail first. The following samples may be of help to you (see Figure 1). Remember that you must provide information on your specific needs and a clear description of what you would like them to do. You will have to sell yourself, so include information on your students and how they will benefit from this type of experience.

It may be just as easy to call someone directly. You should also consider social contacts or neighbors as possible resources.

Q. **What else should I do in preparation?**

A. The following special tips for using resources may be helpful:

- Use resources that can help you achieve the objectives of the lesson or unit to be studied. Never use resources just to use up time.
- Guest speakers should be fully informed of (a) the age level of the students; (b) the general thrust of the lesson or unit being studied; (c) what he or she is to discuss and how it relates to the lesson or unit; (d) what the speaker may wish to bring to the class; (e) the place and date the speaker is expected; and (f) the length of time you wish them to speak. You need to know if the speaker will require any special equipment.
- Inform students about who will be coming to the school and why. Have students formulate questions for the speaker in advance.
- Students may benefit most fully from field trip experiences if they know where they are going, why they are going, and what they can expect to see and do on the trip. It is frequently helpful for students to have observation sheets to record information about the trip. Followup activities help students summarize what they learned, whom they met, and what they felt about the trip.
- Work exploration experiences are most beneficial when students and parents (a) have choices among work sites; (b) know why they are having the experience and how it relates

FIGURE 1. Sample contact letters.

Officer Ralph Lubman
Harlen Police Department
Court House Avenue, Room 325
Harlan, New Jersey

Dear Officer Lubman:

I am a special education teacher at Lowell School and am presently teaching my students basic survival skills which will help them get around independently. I have been emphasizing the role of police officers in our community and the many different tasks they perform. I am also very interested in explaining the various techniques the police department employs in order to protect us.

It is for this reason that I am contacting you. It has come to my attention that your canine corps visited a school in the county. The teacher with whom I spoke was extremely impressed with your demonstration.

I was wondering if we might discuss the possibility of your visiting our school some time and will contact you next week so that we can further discuss the matter. I look forward to working with you. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jean Smith
Lowell Elementary School
761 Flanders Drive
Harlen, New Jersey

Mrs. Roslyn White
School Relations Department
National Geographic Society
1302 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mrs. White:

I am a special education teacher in Arlington, Virginia, and have been trying very hard to integrate creative art experience in my daily program. Many of my students have communication problems, and I feel that by providing them with movement, rhythm, and art activities they will improve their expressive abilities. I have done some background reading in this area.

I recently read about your program in *Exceptional Child* and am very interested in learning more about it. From the article, I understand that your department at National Geographic prepares curriculum guides for integrating the arts in social studies units, and that you sponsor four hour-long sessions for students in the public schools. I am very anxious to discuss your program and any available resources you may be able to offer.

Please contact me at your convenience so that we can arrange a meeting. I look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,
Stuart Payne
Sunrise Elementary
1920 Spring Street
Arlington, Virginia

to present, previous, and future instruction; (c) know what they can expect to see and do; (d) know with whom they will be working; (e) know how long they will be involved in the experience; (f) know how they will get to and from the school and work site; and (g) know what expenses are involved (Johnson, 1980).

- Encourage other teachers to pool information to expand your list of resources. The school district may have a coordinator who can help.

Q. **What happens if resource persons do not return any calls or answer my letter?**

A. An understanding of the community and the particular manner in which different organizations operate is important. For example, in the business community, as in any community, a certain procedure is followed before decisions are made. Corporate etiquette is very different from educational. Status and competition are an integral part of the business world. Many business people are not trained listeners. So, you as a teacher must know who to contact and how to go about initiating community involvement. Responses sometimes will take more time than you originally expected. Thus, what you may interpret as a negative answer or no response at all may actually be a request that must be reviewed by a board of directors or a higher authority who is away on business. The community representative will expect you to share the commitment and support that you are requesting of them. They must be dealt with in a direct manner. Educational jargon must not hamper the communication process. Without your support, the cooperative effort will be doomed before it even starts.

As the initiator of the contact, you need to be aware of problems that might have arisen in the past as a result of (a) red tape; (b) lack of well defined objectives on the part of the teacher; (c) misinformation; (d) lack of understanding of the other person's framework, or use of technical jargon; (e) unwillingness to cooperate, closed mindedness, lack of empathy; (f) past failures; or (g) jumping to conclusions or making false assumptions.

Q. **How do I evaluate these experiences?**

A. With followup activities and feedback you will be able to evaluate your methods and materials and see how successful you were in meeting your students' needs as stated in the individualized education program. Much discussion summarizing what the students did or who they met should be generated in the classroom.

Q. **How about parents? Should they be considered as a community resource?**

A. Without a doubt! Parents can and should be tapped as valuable resources that can enhance your program. Again, there are extensive possibilities. Serving as volunteers, they can help locate and develop instructional materials and assist with management on field trips. Many have interesting hobbies or jobs that they could share with the children. They can arrange for work experiences and assist in school newsletters. Often, parents are used as contacts with the community.

It is up to you, the teacher, to provide opportunities for parent involvement. Initiating discussion groups and enlisting parent participation in PTA activities and advisory committees is your responsibility. Parent involvement is critical for support in the classroom and for reinforcement of career education attitudes in the home.

Q. **How about communications with administrators and parents? What can I do to foster and maintain their support?**

A. Many parents and administrators do not understand career education and what it is all about. If they did, they would see that it is merely an extension of the already existing program. As the teacher, you need to educate administrators in your schools and parents of your students so that they can assist you in your efforts. Ways to accomplish this include:

- Meet frequently with administrators, both formally and informally.
- Conduct a dialogue with parents and administrators to take care of problems before they become major issues.
- Present career education goals as logical extensions of the IEP.
- Provide parents with some type of progress report on an ongoing basis.
- Invite administrators and parents to visit specific classes or workshops.
- Publicize community involvement in your program.

Q. **Are there some examples of community/education cooperation?**

A. Programs focusing on career education for exceptional children are developing throughout the country. Much of their success appears to be a function of the quality of the cooperative effort established between educators and various community sectors. All of the programs stress the wide range of opportunities available. They try to correct the narrow views of stereotyped career options for exceptional individuals.

CULTURAL INSTITUTIONS

A number of programs have developed which have adopted the arts as teaching tools for exceptional students. Planners are dedicated to the idea that an intensive art experience can alter the self image of a child. The programs combine the efforts of cultural institutions such as museums, performing arts companies, science and art centers, and schools, in order to increase self awareness and cultivate talent. Thus, starting with self awareness, the ultimate goal would be preparation for a specific career.

National Committee* Arts for the Handicapped

The National Committee* Arts for the Handicapped (NCAH) is an example of such a collaborative effort. It is composed of leaders from major national arts organizations, organizations representing handicapped citizens, general education organizations, and private foundations. NCAH is dedicated to the philosophy that the arts assist all people in understanding themselves and the world in which they live. NCAH is committed to providing a high quality arts program and curriculum material for those interested in sponsoring model arts programs for exceptional students.

Cultural Education Collaborative

The Cultural Education Collaborative in Boston, a nonprofit educational organization dedicated to the use of cultural organizations as educational resources, is another example of collaboration. One program that they sponsor combines the efforts of Theatre Workshop of Boston and four classroom teachers at Fairmount Elementary School, two regular classroom teachers and two special education teachers. Using theater techniques and activities such as movement, rhythm, and structured play, combined with teacher training and classroom sessions for the children, themes from the teachers' curricula are integrated into the program while the concentration, self control, and self awareness of the students are stressed. Opportunities are provided to meet with and observe the people who make the theater run, which include actors, actresses, the manager, producer, director, lighting technician, and box office attendant. Students who participate

learn a great deal about their own feelings and potential, as well as the many factors and career opportunities of the theater.

Another program sponsored by the Cultural Education Collaborative combines the efforts of the Museum of Transportation, the Next Move Theatre Company, and a local high school. The students, educable mentally retarded youths ranging in age from 14 to 19, study daily living skills and specialized use of transportation around Boston. Role playing situations on such themes as "what happens when you get lost in Boston" help promote self confidence in regard to exploring the city. This particular program also serves to increase mobility around the city, decision making skills, and understanding of careers related to transportation and theater.

The Process Theatre

The Process Theatre, a project sponsored by the Alan Short Center of the Arts for the Handicapped in Stockton, California, is a 1977 NCAH model site, developed for physically and mentally handicapped individuals over 18. The project produced an original musical comedy, *FATSO,* which has been so successful that a national tour is planned.

Some of these programs can be applied in your own situation with the support of local art groups; others can be introduced on a simple scale by yourself. Puppetry, which usually produces lots of spontaneous reactions from children, encourages verbal expression. Children could be involved in an ongoing project in which they work together, constructing puppets, creating dialogue, and presenting a finished product to another class. This could be tied to any unit of study and serves to raise self concepts. You might want to contact community resources for materials such as a large box for a stage. Perhaps a parent could assist in teaching the students how to make clothing for the puppets.

SERVICE CLUBS

Community clubs and organizations can be valuable resources for teachers in the process of integrating career education into their special education curriculum.

4-H has been developing new projects for guiding children in career experience as well as training their volunteer leaders for the incorporation of exceptional children into their programs. Moreover, 4-H hopes to make programs available to a variety of exceptional children during the school day. One must note that because 4-H receives part of its funding from the United States Department of Agriculture, it is the only youth organization with a mandate to provide its members with educational experiences.

In Fairfax County, Virginia, an elementary school principal in cooperation with the 4-H Extension Office instituted a program for gifted and talented students. Although most 4-H programs operate after school with volunteers serving as leaders, this particular program occurs during the school day with a teacher serving as leader. It involves a Goat Project, with the students assuming complete responsibility for the care of four goats that are housed in a small barn behind the school. This program has been very successful because it provides the students with a hands-on experience in which they take great pride.

In York County, Virginia, a sewing project and a woodworking project were developed for students with hearing impairments. This was the result of a self contained classroom teacher's concern for her students, hearing impaired 7 to 14 year olds, who were housed in an elementary school that had no vocational education facilities. She decided to contact the 4-H extension agent in her district and, working closely with a volunteer leader and her own aide, instituted the projects. This project is noteworthy because 4-H was serving students who had previously received no specific vocational opportunities in the school.

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES

Governmental agencies are certainly prime examples of valuable resources to tap. They possess a wealth of literature, funds, and advice which you should consider. You may want to contact the National Park Service, which will be happy to assist you in the development of leisure time activities for students in some of the many parks they maintain throughout the country. The possibilities are extensive.

A specific example of a program that represents a government collaborative effort is the Summer Lifetime Skills Program in Minnesota. This program, made possible through the combined efforts of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), vocational rehabilitation, special education, and vocational education, allows educable and trainable mentally retarded students to develop skills at full time employment in an environment that fosters independent decision making and good judgment. The six week summer work experience provides jobs for students at a state hospital during the day and furnishes housing for them in cabins by a lake.

The students receive a salary which serves to teach them personal financing, savings, and budgeting. Integrated in the program are other essential duties such as buying groceries, cooking, and housecleaning. Emphasis is placed on learning to function effectively both individually and in a group. Also included are leisure time activities such as swimming, field trips, and organized recreation. Thus, by combining government and educational resources, these students are given

an opportunity to reach their fullest potential for lifelong independence and satisfaction. This, of course, is the major purpose for any career education program. So, be sure to tap government agencies in your community. It will be worth the effort.

CONCLUSION

So, you have your IEP's written, and you have an idea of what you want to teach. Now it is time to stop and think; how will you teach it? What community resources right in your community can you use? How will you go about contacting them? By integrating career education into your special education curriculum, using the IEP as a management tool, you will be enhancing your program and making it more meaningful to your students.

As you make your contacts, be aware of the following:

10 Steps to Follow in Resource Procurement

1. Make an inventory of potential community resources available in your area.
2. Examine the objectives of your program; define your purposes.
3. Select specific resources that will best meet objectives.
4. Make initial contact with your resources through a letter of introduction to the public relations department or the appropriate individual, depending on the size of the organization. Parents can be very useful at this point. You should request literature explaining each organization.
5. If a response is received, act by calling or writing to explain clearly your classroom objectives and needs. Patience and open lines of communication will pay off.
6. If there is no response, don't give up. Your contact may be very busy or may never have received the original correspondence. Try calling the person. If he or she is too busy, ask for a suggestion for another contact. If a large company or organization is involved, perhaps your principal or supervisor will need to speak to the president or vice president. Remember to observe proper organizational etiquette.
7. If the contact person will be working only with you, set up a meeting at his or her place of work to discuss in depth the expectations of both parties and the needs of the students. At this time, if possible, arrange for a brief introduction to the students. This is particularly important if a project will involve a great deal of contact with the students.
8. If your contacts include a committee or members of different sectors, be certain all representatives are present.
9. The teacher or teacher representatives should visit work sites, if applicable. Again, parents familiar with the students and the program could be useful.
10. Maintain records of resources tapped as well as evaluations of services provided. Follow up with your resources to let them know how helpful they were.

Remember, it is your responsibility, the responsibility of all educators, to open lines of communication and deal with the total community. By combining efforts, you help your students, your community, and yourself. Good luck!

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